

ABILENE REFLECTOR

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BALLAD OF HOUSECLEANING.

BY A. VICTOR.

Father out of temper,
Mother tired and dusty,
Not a room to sit in,
Children damp and musty;
Colds and influenza,
Ague and consumption;
Father lost his temper,
Mother lost her gumption;
Breakfast scrub and scold,
Dinner cold and scanty,
Supper, none to speak of,
In this wretched shanty.

Floors with waterlogging,
Parlors damp and dreary;
Everybody nervous,
Everybody weary,
Things in various places,
Places all demolished,
Everything chaotic,
Order all demolished;
Beds with rubbish littered,
Shirts and pillows missing,
Lots of time for scrubbing—
None is left for kissing.

Windows wide open,
Kaleidoscopes of rain,
Scatter flakes of whitewash,
Like the snows of heaven;
Plumbers at the basins,
Earning lots of money,
Father mad as a cat,
(Children think it funny);
Boys in every corner,
Piled up hellish clutter;
Want a place for Christian
Soul to seek a shelter!

Carpets shrunk and wrinkled,
Will not stretch or flatten;
(Who on earth has wrinkled
Whitewash on my satin?)
Children damp and musty,
Croupy in the morning;
None to seek the doctor—
Bridget's given warning.

Bill for ripping carpets,
Bill for scrubbing floors,
Bill for broken windows,
Bill for every leak;
Bill for pill and physic,
Bill for kalsomine;
Bill for Brussels carpet,
Bill for scrubbing floors;
Bill for scrubbing floors,
Washing, cleaning, soaking;
Would that we could pay them
By a wholesale choking!

When this wild wailing
Foolish wail is ended—
Then the ill of cleaning
About suspended—
All our bright and pretty,
Every thing in order,
Then we leave the city,
Go and play the boarder;
Leave our pretty mansion
In the railway coaches,
Leave it to the rodents,
Water-lungs and rheu-
Go and dwell in Jersey,
Dine on pork and bacon,
Feed the force militia—
With the chicks all shaken.

In the fall, returning
To our humble dwelling,
Heart of wife and maid,
All our fear dispelling—
Yearning for another
Spell of wild wailing,
Reckless, dreary, musty,
Never-ending cleaning,
Rip up every carpet,
Yank down every curtain!
Restor peace for money,
Earth there's none; 'tis certain!

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HOW MARY CAME.

A True Love Story of the Old
World and the New.

There was a larger crowd than usual
around the railroad depot at Prairie City,
Dakota, on July 12. It was an anniversary
in the history of the place and the people
were indulging in something of a celebra-
tion. Prairie City was celebrating the
twenty-five or thirty freight cars and one
passenger coach behind them, came delib-
erately in an hour behind time and steadily
losing, the crowd had arranged itself into
that attitude of grace peculiar to such
assemblages. The majority were armed
with large jack-knives and busily engaged
in whittling pieces of pine split from the
corners of the dry-goods boxes scattered
about. Those near the depot were busy
taking their hands in their pockets and
appeared to be deploring the fact that they
could not do that and whistle at the same
time. The July sun shone down fiercely
and was reflected from the unpainted sides
of the depot building with surprising in-
tensity. There was a light wind, but it was
dry and hot, and not the cool and refreshing
breeze that was supposed to fan the cheek
of the dweller in that region.

The locomotive stopped just beyond the
depot and took water. A brakeman got
down on the platform and gossiped with
the crowd, and the conductor went in and
held a long, mysterious conference with the
station agent, as was his wont each day.

"Got a snore in your eye, fer ye?" said
Three-fingered Jim, the head brakeman.
"What be they?" asked Paddy O'Shaugh-
nessy.

"Norsks,"
"I expect," returned Paddy, with undis-
guised scorn.

"You shouldn't speak so slightly of
'em," said Judge Wilkins, "they'll help de-
velop the country."

"Develop nothin'! W'y, they can't talk,
tan they, Jimmy?"

"Naw, grow 'uns right from where
they grow. Half a dozen Norwegians and a
Finlander. Yes, and I believe there's a
Denmarker, too," added Jim, meditatively.

"Finlander, hey?" demanded Paddy, and
he fairly groaned with the worst kind of
knowing there be. They don't never know
nothin' at all. W'y, I seen 'em where they
be in this country years and they keeps
sayin' 'who' when they want their oxen to
stop. 'Ye all knows it," he added, appeal-
ing to the crowd.

"I am not really particular how they in-
duce their oxen to stop if I can have the job
of locating them on some land," said Law-
yer Barker.

"O, yer thinks yer can make some money
out of 'em," returned Paddy, derisively.

"But they says 'who' to their oxen and I
knows it," and he retired very much dis-
gusted with a community that would not
unanimously denounce a race guilty of such
a heinous crime.

While this conversation was taking place
the emigrants had been coming from the
car up to the depot—the length of the train
making it no inconsiderable walk. There
were a dozen of them, and they were short
and dressed in a picturesque way as when
they embarked at Christiania or Helsing-
fors. They all had the fair hair and com-
plexions and blue eyes of the Scandinavians.

Most of the men were tall and well-pro-
portioned, though some of them were short
and thick—there seemed to be one standard
size so far as width was concerned, and
the man who unfortunately stopped grow-
ing at five feet was the same size other
ways as his six-foot companion.

The women appeared stout and healthy
and well able to take care of themselves
and the children and numerous bundles. They
were small, bright-colored shawls on their
heads and a long scarf around their shoul-
ders and waists. The children brought up
the rear of the procession, keeping hold of
hands and very close together, but they
could not stare around with much greater
curiosity than did their elders. They were
dressed exactly like their fathers and
mothers, and the fact that a girl wore a
dress reaching almost to the ground, and a
boy a great double-breasted vest with brass
buttons on it, did not indicate that either
was over six or seven years of age.

Judging from the dress of the whole
party, the extremely elevated condition in
which they found the mercury must have

been something of a surprise to them. To
put it mildly and avoid even the appearance
of exaggeration it must be said that they
were dressed comfortably. This was
especially the case with the men, who must
be expected to encounter the rigors of the
fjords and snow-covered mountains of the
old home near the arctic circle, and not the
fervor of a mid-continental July day.

One of them, who kept a little apart from
the rest, was especially fortified. His high
boots reaching above the knee and laced
from the ankle showed that he was the
Finlander the brakeman had spoken of—
who had probably come to this country with
the avowed purpose of using language to
his own that no American could hear.

His head was covered with a large fur cap
with immense flapping side-pieces designed
to turn down and protect his ears. The hot
wind was further defied by several gaily-
colored scarves, one of them tied around his
waist like a large sash, a double-breasted
vest that must have been an heirloom, a
sheepskin coat, the wool inside, together
with the boots before referred to. He did
not appear to be too warm, though it was
remarked by the observant crowd on the
platform that he was wearing too much.

He was a tall, finely formed specimen of
manhood, with honest, blue eyes and an
intelligent expression. He appeared some-
what perplexed as he looked around. He
could not talk with the rest of the emigrants,
the Norwegian and Finnish language have
but little in common. His inquiries in his
native tongue of the platform crowd con-
cerning the whereabouts of any of his
countrymen did not meet with the most
flattering success.

"We buried the last wan of ye's people,"
said Paddy, "an' we'll plant ye too 'fore ye
knows it."

"W'y don't you talk United States?"
asked another.

"The fast-bones are sticking in his teeth
so he can't," put in a third.

Then the crowd smiled at the surprising
amount of humor it had developed, and
Judge Wilkins pointed out the station agent
to the bewildered Finlander. He presented
a check and claimed a small wooden iron-
bound chest, painted a vivid red. The chest
had heavy iron handles and an immense
hand-made padlock. On one end of it was
painted in curious-shaped white letters,
"Peter Erik Petersen, Dakota, Prains
City, Nort. Amerikka, New York."

He carried a smaller chest in his hand bearing
the same legend. It is supposed that the
New York was added to identify North
America.

Peter, which he soon recognized to Peter,
shouldered his trunk and walked away, but
which act gave the crowd on the platform
considerable respect for his strength, even
if it retained its poor opinion of him as a
linguist. He succeeded in finding a man
who could understand a few words of his
language, who directed him towards a res-
tatement of his people several miles from
town, and he proceeded in that direction,
still carrying his baggage—other people
might trust their possessions out of their
sight if it could be trusted to him.

But Peter had many things in view; he
had come to the new world to do a great
work, and he thought of it and made his
burden lighter. For Peter had come on a
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inclosed a little mountain flower he pressed
moss from the old home and he showed it
proudly to his friends, and they looked at it
almost reverently and agreed that although
it was quite so lovely as the flowers and
mosses from their old fatherland.

So the season wore along without much
change till winter. Peter could hope for
when spring came the prospect brightened.
Work was more plentiful than during the
summer before. It would be but a short
time and he could send for Mary. How
easy it was to work when he thought of
that!

He had taken a claim, and before he
came he would have a house built on it
which for elegance would rival any
thing in the whole settlement—and it
would all be built of sod, kool! For a sod
house was considered a palace if you
moved into it in the right spirit. So
there was no doubt that it would be a palace
to them.

On the anniversary of the day that Peter
arrived at Prairie City he appeared early in
the morning at one of the local steamship
ticket agencies found wherever there is
even a small per cent. of foreign popula-
tion. He made his wants known in broken,
but fairly good English, and soon had a
ticket which would send him to Mary.

It would bring her away from the little
village in the old world to a little village in
the new where he would meet her. But it
would be a long time yet before she would
reach there, for it was a long way—it was
about as long as the distance from the
mountain, if he could see it and tell of it
one way as the other, Peter estimated,
and he had traveled it and ought to
know—so she would not arrive till
some time in the fall. Peter went back
to work and built the house and earned a
surprising amount of money by his work
for the neighbors, and had the very best of
good luck in every way. The house was
even more sumptuous and really more el-
egant in its appointments than he had dared
to hope. He invited the neighbors to the
house and they came and he showed them
a check and claimed a small wooden iron-
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her words, and she said she felt better,
that she was only faint. She could not be
moved to any more comfortable place while
the storm lasted. Prairie City could not
yet boast a physician, so the agent went
away and left them.

And Peter sat by her side a long time
before she spoke again. At last she opened
her eyes and whispered:
"Peter, I have been a long time coming to
see you."

"Yes, Mary, but you are here now."
"I hope I can stay, Peter, I like it here."
And she closed her eyes again, and Peter
buried his face in his hands and it seemed
as if the light had almost gone out of his
life. He watched through the long hours,
but she did not seem to have strength
enough to speak again. And the rain beat
against the window pane and the wind
moaned, but they did not hear.

And when the people came the next
morning they found Mary still and un-
conscious, and Peter kneeling on the floor with
his head on her bosom; and he had gone to
sleep there not to wake again, and with a
frown on his face as he lay to his lips.

And this is how Mary came to Prairie
City, and how she and Peter went away
together.—*Dakota Bell.*

INTELLIGENT PIGS.

Well Authenticated Cases of Great Sagacity Displayed by Bright Porkers.

Next to the donkey, there is no four-
footed creature that has been so mal-
igned as piggy. Time and again he
has shown himself to be a very clever
and even sagacious beast. It is cruelly
libelous to regard the pig as a stupid,
brutal, gluttonous and uncleanly quad-
ruped, groveling and repulsive in all
its habits and intractable and obstinate
in temper. He may often seem to be
endowed with these disgraceful attrib-
utes, because, as a rule, there is nothing
in the life of a pig in his domesti-
cated state to call for any exercise of
his reasoning faculties. His sole busi-
ness is to eat, drink, sleep and get fat;
all his wants are anticipated and his
mental horizon is bounded by the fence
which guards his sty. When, however,
it is the interest or the whim of his pos-
sessor to teach the pig or to fondle him,
he can be, without much difficulty, con-
verted into a docile pupil and a highly
pleasing pet. The original learned pig
which was exhibited in Pall Mall nearly
a hundred years ago had been taught
to pick up letters written upon pieces of
cardboard at command and arrange them
into words. This intelligent creature
died in due course of nature, as
all mortal swine must do; but since 1789
there has never been a solution of contin-
uity in the race of learned pigs exhibited
at country fairs, although none have shown
equal talent with the sage of Pall
Mall. There is the well-known case, too,
of the gentleman residing at Caversham, who, at Reading
market bought two pigs, which were
conveyed to his house in a sack and
turned into a yard on the bank of the
Thames. The next morning the animals
were missing. A hue and cry was
raised and information was brought that
two pigs had been seen swimming
across the river at nearly its broadest
point. They were afterward observed
travelling along the Pangbourne road and
in one place where the road bifurcates
they were seen putting their noses to-
gether as if in earnest consultation.

Eventually they returned safely to the
farm-house whence they had been origi-
nally conveyed to Reading. The farmer
sent them back to the gentleman at
Caversham, but again the animals con-
trived to make their escape, swimming
the river as though they had been two
dogs and thereby refuting the proverb-
ial but slanderous imputation that pigs
can not swim without cutting their
throats. It is well known that at pro-
vincial regattas pigs have frequently
taken prizes for feats in notation. The
ingenious Dr. Erasmus Darwin, in his
"Zoonomia," has, perhaps, most suc-
cinctly, yet most comprehensively, sum-
med up the case for and against their
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intelligence.

There it is. The infelicitous piggy
carries even in his babyhood, as it were,
the word of doom, "thanatos," branded
on his snout. In his sucking stage
gondrums hunger for his flabby flesh
and yearn to see his yet tender pachy-
dermatous envelop scorched into crisp
crackling. His brain power has no time
for development; since his cerebral
organism is ruthlessly utilized as brain
sausage, or if he be allowed a somewhat
longer span of life, he is dairy-fed only
to be slaughtered and roasted with the
appanements of sage and onions and
apple sauce.

Pigs have been repeatedly known to
attach themselves to individuals or to
other animals and to show the greatest
docility, gentleness and affection. Mr.
Henderson, the writer of a well-known
book on swine, relates that he had a
young sow of a good breed so docile
that she would suffer his youngest son,
three years of age, to climb upon her
back and ride her about for half an
hour at a time and more. When she
was tired of the sport she would lay
herself down, carefully avoiding hurt-
ing her young jockey, who habitually
shared his bread and meat with her.
DeDiessen also cites the case of a wild
boar which he caught very young and
which formed such an attachment to a
young lady residing in the house that
he accompanied her wherever she went
and slept upon her bed. This affection-
ate creature fretted himself to death on
account of a fox which had been taken
into the house to be tamed.—*London
Telegraph.*

Superstitious Chinamen.

Chinese laborers will not work in the
big canyon through which the Cascade
division of the Northern Pacific rail-
road runs, because several Chinese
men have been killed there. They think
that it is inhabited by devils with strong
anti-Chinese sentiments. Nine Chinese
men were killed there some time ago
by falling trees, and ten coffins were
sent up. This was looked upon as a
bad omen by the Chinese and they were
very uneasy as long as the spare coffin
lay around camp. It was not long till
a rumour occurred, and